

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8002

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FOR CU/WE

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC SEDU EI

SUBJ: STUDENT EXCHANGE

1. BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FOR THE U.S., AMBASSADOR CURLEY RECEIVED ADRIAN FOLEY OF THE UNION OF STUDENTS IN IRELAND TRAVEL BUREAU (AT FOLEY'S REQUEST) TO DISCUSS THE STATUS OF THE EXCHANGE STUDENT PROGRAM. THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS SUMMARIZE THE DISCUSSION:

2. MR FOLEY SAID THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT WOULD LIKE THE EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM TO OPERATE ON A STRICT ONE-TO-ONE BASIS. THEY REALIZE THAT, FOR IRELAND AT LEAST, THIS IS NOT A PRACTICAL PROPOSITION AND HAVE AGREED THAT IRISH STUDENTS MAY HAVE 300 PLACES IN THE US, WHILE USIT AND THEIR CO-SPONSORS, CIEE USE THEIR BEST EFFORTS TO ENSURE THAT A REASONABLE NUMBER OF US STUDENTS AVAIL THEMSELVES OF THE PROGRAM TO IRELAND.

3. FOR THE BICENTENNIAL, USIT IS OFFERING A FREE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM TO 200 US STUDENTS. AGAINST THIS PROGRAM, USIT SUGGESTED TO THE STATE DEPTMENT THAT 2,000 PLACES BE MADE AVAILABLE TO IRISH STUDENTS VISITING THE UNITED STATES. THE STATE DEPARTMENT SUGGESTED 250 PLACES. USIT BELIEVES THIS OFFER OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT WAS BASED ON AN ASSUMPTION THAT THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM TO IRELAND WOULD NOT MATERIALIZE TO AN ACCEPTABLE LEVEL. (THE EMBASSY HAS SEEN THE EFFORTS TO PROMOTE THIS PROGRAM. IT IS IMPRESSIVE AND

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THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT ABOUT 150 US STUDENTS WILL AVAIL

THEMSELVES OF THE OPPORTUNITY).

4. USIT BELIEVES THAT THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM TO IRELAND HAS REACHED AN ACCEPTABLE LEVEL, AND THEY HOPE THAT THE DEPARTMENT MIGHT BE RECEPTIVE TO A REQUEST TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PLACES FOR IRISH STUDENTS AGAINST THIS PROGRAM. IN USIT'S OPINION, AN INCREASE FROM 250 TO 600 PLACES WOULD NOT BE UNREASONABLE.

5. IN ADDITION TO SHOWING THE AMBASSADOR EVIDENCE OF A GOOD FAITH EFFORT TO MOUNT A MEANINGFUL RECIPROCAL PROGRAM FOR US STUDENTS TO VISIT IRELAND, USIT POINTED OUT THAT THEY HAD BEEN CRITICISED IN EARLIER YEARS FOR THE FACT THAT THEIR PARTICIPANTS HAD BEEN CARRIED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY BY IRISH AIRLINES. TO MEET THIS CRITICISMS, USIT IS PLANNING FOR 60 PERCENT OF THE FLIGHTS IN 1976 TO BE ON AMERICAN CARRIERS.

6. THE AMBASSADOR WAS TOLD THAT AN OFFICIAL OF THE IRISH EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON WAS PLANNING TO APPROACH CU/WE WITH THEIR REQUEST TO INCREASE THE ALLOTMENT AND THE AMBASSADOR'S SUPPORT WAS SOLICITED. THE AMBASSADOR RECOUNTED HIS EFFORTS WITH US OFFICIALS DURING THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICIAL VISIT IN MARCH. HE ALSO SAID HE SUPPORTED USIT'S EFFORTS TO INCREASE THE FLOW OF STUDENTS DURING THE BICENTENNIAL YEAR AND WOULD LET THE DEPARTMENT KNOW OF THAT SUPPORT. THE AMBASSADOR CAUTIONED, HOWEVER, THAT THERE WERE DOMESTIC CONSIDERATIONS THAT US OFFICIALS HAD TO CONSIDER AND HE HAD NO WAY OF KNOWING WHETHER AN INCREASE WOULD BE POSSIBLE. RENDAHL

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